



DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

County of Los Angeles
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Judy

October 4, 2005

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To: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
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From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Janssen", is written over the printed name and title of the sender.

TOPANGA INCIDENT AND HARVARD INCIDENT CLOSE-OUT REPORT

BACKGROUND

The Los Angeles County Operational Area Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) activated on Wednesday, September 28, 2005 at 4:30 p.m. in response to fires in and around the communities and cities of Hidden Hills, Chatsworth, Los Angeles and unincorporated Los Angeles County. County departments that reported to the CEOC, or activated in their own department operation centers, included Animal Care and Control, CAO Office of Emergency Management, Public Social Services, Fire, Health Services, Sheriff, Probation, and Public Works.

On September 30, 2005, I signed an amended proclamation of a local emergency covering all of Los Angeles County. The City of Hidden Hills proclaimed a state of local emergency on September 28, 2005.

During this same time frame, a major fire also erupted in the City of Burbank. Updated information regarding that fire, known as the Harvard Incident, is also contained in this report.

Call 2-1-1 L. A. County has public information about shelters and available County services.

STATUS OF THE FIRES (from County Fire Report)

Topanga Incident

Latest reports indicate that 24,175 acres have burned within several communities in the Chatsworth area near the border of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. Containment is now at 95% percent. Full containment is expected by 6:00 p.m. tonight. Approximately 1,341 firefighters remain on scene, supported by multiple helicopters, hand crews and dozers. A total of 27 firefighters sustained mild to moderate injuries. Structure loss remains at three homes and three commercial buildings. All evacuations have been lifted and evacuation shelters have been closed. All roads are open and have unrestricted access. Pre-deployment of resources strategically around the perimeter of the fire is underway due to the predicted Santa Ana winds.

Harvard Incident (initially Castaway Incident)

Latest reports indicate that approximately 1,045 acres have burned and that containment is now at 100%. All evacuations have been lifted and no shelters are open. Outside resources are being released and the City of Burbank's EOC closed at noon today. Patrols will continue to be made to check for hot spots.

DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

Below are updated reports of activities of other County departments. The CEOC returned to Duty Officer status at 6:00 p.m. on September 30, 2005.

Animal Control

Animal Care and Control reports that they are currently releasing animals to their owners from the Agoura shelter and that their Department Operations Center in Agoura closed at 12:00 p.m. on September 30, 2005.

Health Services (DHS)

Public Health Nurses and Environmental Health visited the American Red Cross (ARC) sponsored shelters to assess the health and human needs of the evacuees. Environmental Health ensured that the shelters were in compliance with appropriate health statutes.

Public Health's Health Facilities Inspection Division was informed, as required, of the evacuation of the Chatsworth Park Care Center, as well as the evacuation of the United Cerebral Palsy/Spastic Children's facility. Both facilities had their evacuation plans in place and acted accordingly. They were advised to evacuate by the Fire Department. The clients returned to their respective facilities when the situation was deemed safe.

The department prepared and released an Updated Caution Advisory on October 3, 2005 regarding the smoke and air pollution impacts of the fires, along with precautions for sensitive individuals to reduce exposure. This is the second advisory that has been issued.

Department of Mental Health (DMH)

County DMH worked with the ARC to provide mental health personnel at evacuation shelters, as needed. DMH continues to monitor the situation and has placed Emergency Outreach Bureau staff on stand-by.

Probation

Probation Department has three camps in the vicinity of the fires: Camp David Gonzales, Camp Vernon Kilpatrick, and Camp Fred Patrick. On September 29, 2005, they dispatched three Probation buses and 17 vans to the three camps as a precautionary measure, but they did not have to evacuate any of their camps.

Public Social Services (DPSS)

DPSS coordinated with the ARC to establish two shelters in Los Angeles County, located at Birmingham High School in Van Nuys and Canoga Park High School in Canoga Park. The shelter at Birmingham High School closed down on Friday, September 30, 2005, and the shelter at Canoga Park High School closed down Saturday, October 1, 2005. Seven ARC-trained DPSS staff assisted in shelter operations. DPSS continues to monitor the need to open additional shelters or provide staffing. At this time, there is no need for additional shelters or staff.

Sheriff

The Sheriff's Department continues to provide extra arson patrols and fire watch in the burn affected area of Topanga Canyon. All evacuation areas have been re-opened to residents. The Sheriff's Department's Department Operations Center (DOC) has returned to Duty Pager status and will provide additional personnel and logistical support to the Operational Area, as needed.

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Closing

The fires are at 95% and 100% containment. Barring any new developments, this will be the final report from my office on the Topanga and Harvard fires. If you require further information, please contact me or Constance Perett in the Office of Emergency Management at (323) 980-2261.

DEJ:CP
JH:cm

c: Emergency Management Council
 Emergency Management Council Steering Committee
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